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PROGRAM Opinion

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SILLY PUTTY AWARD

JOHN HART: An opinion now from Nicholas von Hoffman columnist for the King Feature Syndicate. It's his own opinion.

NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN: The Silly Putty Award of the week goes to John A. McCone, ex-chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, ex-head of the CIA, and current member of the board of ITT. Mr. McCone has proven that to be rich, famous, and powerful, you don't have to be smart.

Before a Senate committee the other day, McCone confessed that in a burst of absolute purblind dullness he went to Henry Kissinger and the CIA with an offer of one million ITT dollars to tamper with the Chilean presidential election of 1970.

This act of consummate stupidity was performed at the behest of Harold S. Geneen, the number one ITT honcho.

The offer was turned down by the CIA which was up to some other kinds of monkey shines in Chile, and Salvador Allende was elected to office. He promptly accused ITT of interfering in his nation's domestic affairs and confiscated the corporation's property.

Viva Allende!

But get this. McCone said ITT did it to fight the Marxist Allende and to frustrate International Communism's "object of destroying the free world." At the same time those corporate freedom fighters are negotiating with the Russians to put ITT owned Avis and ITT owned Sheraton Hotels in the Soviet Union. Thus in one stroke these two bunnies have made themselves look like idiot hypocrites, have compromised their own country, and have supplied all the proof anybody will ever need that there is an international capitalist conspiracy.

Great work, fellas. You've lived up to ITT's slogan "Serving People and the Nations Everywhere." To both of you goes the Silly Putty Award. You've demonstrated you don't need brains to make money.

And this is Nicholas von Hoffman saying the next time you get a bright idea the two of you should stick your heads in one of Dita Beard's shredders.

HART: That is his opinion, not necessarily CBS's or the station you're watching.